LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. No amendments are presented in this response.

1-29. (Cancelled).

30. (Currently Amended) A method for processing invoices, the method being performed by a computer and comprising:

> selecting, from a plurality of electronic-invoice records, by using a processor of the computer, invoices which are due within a pre-selectable time or on a pre-selectable date;

> assigning a first state to the selected invoices, wherein the assigned first state includes a first set of characters that are stored in a data field of each selected electronic-invoice record;

> selecting, from the plurality of electronic-invoice records, invoices that satisfy a specified condition;

> assigning a second state to said selected invoices that satisfy the condition, wherein the second assigned state includes a second set of characters that are stored with the first set of characters in the data field of each selected electronic-invoice record; [[and]]

> assigning a first priority to a first invoice included in the selected invoices, wherein the first invoice is associated with a first due date;

> assigning a second priority to a second invoice included in the selected invoices, wherein the second invoice is associated with a second due date and the second priority is a higher priority than the first priority;

> using the first state and the second state to control processing of the invoices, wherein, based on the first priority and the second priority,

the second invoice is processed before the first invoice even if the second due date identifies a date that occurs after a date identified by the first due date; and

sending a message including description information corresponding to one of the selected invoices, the message including location information identifying a path for accessing the one selected invoice.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, further comprising:

selecting, from said plurality of electronic-invoice records, invoices which meet the additional condition that the respective balance is larger than a pre-selectable first value.

32-35. (Cancelled).

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

selecting, from said plurality of electronic-invoice records, second invoices, a balance of each of which is smaller than a pre-selectable second value and larger than a pre-selectable third value; and

assigning a third state to the second invoices, the second value being smaller than or equal to the first value, and the third value being smaller than the second value.

37. (Cancelled).

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising:

selecting, from said second invoices, third invoices, a balance of each of
which is smaller than the third value; and

assigning a fourth state to the third invoices.

39.   (Cancelled).

40.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the pre-selectable first value is such that a pre-selectable percentage of outstanding active debts or turnover is controlled.

41.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, further comprising:

presenting the invoices of at least one of the first state, the second state, the third state, and the fourth state to a cash collector.

42-44. (Cancelled).

45.   (Previously Presented) The method claim 41, further comprising:

controlling, by said cash collector, whether payments according to the invoices of at least one of the first state and the second state have been made before, on, or after the due date of each invoice, and, in case of non-payment of an invoice, presenting the non-payment invoice to a collecting service.

46-48. (Cancelled).

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising checking whether a non-payment is reasoned, and if the non-payment is not reasoned, presenting such non-payment invoice to an external collecting agency.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising presenting the non-payment invoices to the collecting service as a to-do-list.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, further comprising:

> receiving a request for a state change of a selected invoice from a customer; and

> changing the state of the invoice according to said request.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising presenting the request to an internal clearing division before changing the state.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the method is implemented as part of software for supporting business processes, the software comprising enterprise resource planning software.

54. (Currently Amended) A computer system for processing invoices, including:

> a memory device having program instructions;

> an input device for receiving and entering data;

> a display device for displaying content;

> a storage component for storing data; and

a processor configured to execute the program instructions to:

select, from a plurality of electronic-invoice records, invoices which are due within a pre-selectable time or on a pre-selectable date; assign a first state to the selected invoices, wherein

the assigned first state includes a first set of characters that are stored in a data field of each selected electronic invoice record;

select, from the plurality of electronic invoice records, invoices that satisfy a specified condition;

assign a second state to said selected invoices that satisfy the specified condition, wherein the second assigned state includes a second set of characters that are stored with the first set of characters in the data field of each selected electronic-invoice record; [[and]]

assign a first priority to a first invoice included in the selected invoices, wherein the first invoice is associated with a first due date;

assign a second priority to a second invoice included in the selected invoices, wherein the second invoice is associated with a second due date and the second priority is a higher priority than the first priority; [[and]]

use the first state and the second state to control processing of the invoices, wherein, based on the first priority and the second priority, the second invoice is processed before the first invoice even if the second due date identifies a date that occurs after a date identified by the first due date; and

send a message including description information corresponding to one of the selected invoices, the message including location information identifying a path for accessing the one selected invoice.

55. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory, computer readable storage medium storing a computer program which, when executed by a processor, causes processor to perform a method for processing invoices, the method comprising:

selecting, from a plurality of electronic-invoice records, invoices which are due within a pre-selectable time or on a pre-selectable date; assigning, a first state to the selected invoices, wherein the assigned first state includes a first set of characters that are stored in a data field of each selected electronic invoice record;

selecting, from said plurality of electronic invoice records, invoices that satisfy a condition;

assigning a second state to said selected invoices that satisfy the condition, wherein the second assigned state includes a second set of characters that are stored with the first set of characters in the data field of each selected electronic-invoice record; [[and]]

assigning a first priority to a first invoice included in the selected invoices, wherein the first invoice is associated with a first due date;

assigning a second priority to a second invoice included in the selected invoices, wherein the second invoice is associated with a second due date and the second priority is a higher priority than the first priority;

using the first state and the second state to control processing of the invoices, wherein, based on the first priority and the second priority,

the second invoice is processed before the first invoice even if the second due date identifies a date that occurs after a date identified by the first due date; and

sending a message including description information corresponding to one of the selected invoices, the message including location information identifying a path for accessing the one selected invoice.